

SHEDFIELD PARISH COUNCIL

(Incorporating the villages of Shedfield, Shirrell Heath and Waltham Chase)

MINUTES OF FINANCE AND ADMINISTRATION COMMITTEE MEETING HELD AT 7.15PM, ON MONDAY 25th NOVEMBER 2019, SHEDFIELD PAVILION.

Present: Parish Councillors: Stuart Jones, Margaret Jones, Arthur Reading

In Attendance: RFO – Clare Hinton.

Members of Public: 2.

35/19 **Apologies for absence:** Councillor Maria Robbie, Councillor Caroline Francis-Goulds.

36/19 **Declarations of interest:** None.

37/19 **Minutes of meeting held 29 July 2019:** An amendment was made to minute point 25/19: Councillor Arthur Reading, amended to read Arthur Reading. After the amendment the minutes were accepted and signed as a true copy by the Chair.

38/19 **Public participation:** None.

39/19 **Terms of Reference:** It was noted that the Terms of Reference had been updated to reflect the agreed changes from the last meeting - "To review and update, on an annual basis, the Financial Risk Register, reporting any appropriate amendments to Full Council".

40/19 **Financial reporting of Council:**

i. To confirm current balances: All bank balances were agreed and noted as £405,629.76 (including all short-term investments).

ii. Approval Lists: All approval sheets from Jul - Oct 19 were reviewed. It was noted that there were missing signatures on the Aug and Oct 19 listings. RFO to ensure this is signed.

The expenditure as per the circulated approval lists were noted as:

July 19 £7,694.33

Aug 19 £16,868.52

Sep 19 £17,207.02

Oct 19 £24,817.38

Action:RFO

iii. To consider & review investment options:

The Committee was provided with an up to date schedule of investments. Following on from the previous meetings action points; the RFO reported that there were no restrictions in transferring an additional £30,000 to the NS&I account. It was also noted that the agreed £30,000 transfer from the Barclays Savings to the Unity Trust Savings account had not taken place.

A letter had been received from Skipton ref account 991447888 and its maturity

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date of 22 Nov 19. It was agreed to opt for the “do nothing option” which meant that the investment would renew into a new 1-year Fixed Rate Bond with an interest rate of 1.30% (1.31% previously)

It was resolved that the RFO would prepare a report for the Committee with a suggested plan to incorporate the excess money in the Barclays account and further investment options.

Action:RFO

iv. Review 2019/20 2nd quarter expenditure:

The previously circulated report was reviewed. Comments were made on the following budget headings:

1090 – Website: small overspend of £20 due to unexpected expense of the domain name registration £40.

1165 – Bank Charges: Over spend to budget of £84.60. Barclays are now introducing bank charges, Which had not previously been budgeted for. Going forward a budget is in place.

1540 – Defibrillators: New pads have been bought this year as old ones have expired, costing £129.

1250 – Telephone Kiosks: A £70 overspend was noted. The Bull Lane kiosk has been converted into a plant exchange.

7000 – Ground Maintenance (Common) It was noted that there has been a large underspend to date. This however is expected to be spent in the remaining months.

v. Financial Regulations update: An amendment has been made to the Financial Regulations template (issued July 2019). The Committee agreed to reflect these changes, which were as follows:

P14 Section 11.1.a.ii - wording change “for specialist services such as are provided by legal professionals acting in disputes; ~~for specialist services such as are provided by solicitors, accountants, surveyors and planning consultants;~~”

P14 Section 11.1.b & footnote, amounts updated - “Where the Council intends to procure or award a public supply contract, public service contract or public works contract as defined by The Public Contracts Regulations 2015 (“the Regulations”) which is valued at £25,000 ~~£30,000~~ or more, the Council shall comply with the relevant requirements of the Regulations.

Footnote 3: Thresholds currently applicable are:

a. For public supply and public service contracts 209,000 Euros (£181,302) ~~(£164,176)~~

b. For public works contracts 5,225,000 Euros (£4,551,413) ~~(£4,104,394)~~

P15 Section 12 Heading – changed PAYMENTS UNDER CONTRACTS FOR BUILDING OR OTHER CONSTRUCTION WORKS ~~(PUBLIC WORKS CONTRACTS)~~

Further to the above amendment, in section 6.17 it states ‘*Any business credit card opened by the Council will be specifically restricted to use by the Clerk, RFO and Chair of Finance and shall be subject to automatic payment in full at each month-end*’ whereas in section 10.2 it states that ‘*A member may not issue an official order or make any contract on behalf of the Council.*’ It was agreed that a recommendation will be made to remove “Chair of Finance” from section 6.17 (i.e. only the Clerk and RFO can use the credit card subject to the existing approval requirements)

To be taken to Full Council for adoption on 9 December 2019

Action:RFO

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41/19 Request to spend:

- i. Parkinson Partnership: It had been previously agreed (via email 29/10/19) that the services of Steve Parkinson will be engaged for VAT advice with regards to the Pavilion build. This was at the cost of £600 + VAT.
- ii. Farsight Consultancy engagement letter 2020/21: It had been resolved (via email on 27/08/19) that the services of Mike Platten would be engaged for the 2019/20 Internal Audit at the cost of £320 plus mileage. The RFO signed and returned the letter of engagement on 10/09/19.

42/19 Authorisation of Expenditure process: Councillor Arthur Reading presented the Committee with an extensive report and flow chart on the processes that are required, as detailed in the Financial Regulations. This has been produced for all staff and Councillors to ease the process and for complete clarity going forward.

It was also proposed that at the beginning of each financial year a minute should be made to give the Clerk the authority to spend on various items including work for the Handyman and office expenses such a stationery, cleaning products & postage It was the recommendation of the Committee that this process be put forward to Full Council for adopting as a procedure. **Action:RFO**

43/19 Reserves & CIL: Councillor Arthur Reading presented the Committee with a proposal to revise the earmarked reserves and look at reducing the general reserve in line with current advice and the Internal Auditors reports. The proposal is outlined as follows:

Earmarked reserve	Current £	Proposed £	Comments
Ground Works	10,780	10,000	Potential land drainage at Waltham Chase
Litigation	30,000	3,000	Insurance covers major litigation
Play Equipment	30,000	10,000	No major equipment planned at present
Bus Shelters	6,942	7,000	2 new bus shelters planned
Monuments	10,000	6,000	Costs of cleaning Wayfarers monument
Elections	2,000	2,000	WCC can pass on election costs
Office Equipment	2,210	2,000	Potential requirement following Pavilion extension
Common	7,000	5,000	Upkeep contained in budget. Tree works required within 5 years. Friends of Shedfield Common set up costs
Employment Legal Advice	1,500	1,500	
Security	4,000	4,000	Pavilion update
Village & Land Signs	6,000	2,500	New Noticeboard (or repairs) required
CIL	139,254	0	Transfer to new pavilion extension reserve
Total Earmarked	249,686	53,000	Total reduction of £57,432
General Reserve at time of report	165,269	50,000	Reduce to 50% expenditure releasing £115,269 to move to earmarked
NEW: Pavilion extension	0	240,000	

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NEW: MUGA	0	71,955	To look at increasing to £100,000
Total funds available	414,955	414,955	

It was also noted that there may be a request for funding for a Speed Limit Reminder of £4,000 and a further £3,600 for SLR posts. Speed Watch may also request £3,000. The proposal is to go to Full Council for further discussion and agreement.

Action:RFO

44/19 **To finalise 2020/21 budgets, including all Committees & Charities:**

The Committee reviewed the previously circulated proposed budgets. The following comments and concerns were raised:

- All income codes were agreed.
- 1000 Salaries – suggested reduction to £37,000.
- 1005 ASCO – increase to £5000.
- 1070 Photocopier – RFO to check.
- 1080 Computer Software – suggested increase to £900.
- 1130 Chairman's Allowance – suggested reduction to £300.
- 1140 Hall Hire – Delete, comes from Chairman's allowance.
- 1160 Non-Domestic Rates – Delete, no rates paid.
- 1180 Solicitor/Legal Fees – Delete, Reserve in place.
- 1190 Elections – Delete, Reserve in place.
- 1230 Office Equipment – Delete, Reserve in place.

The new suggested expenditure total would be £70,504 which was agreed subject to a final review of the changes by the RFO.

It was also agreed that further information was required on the 7000 Common maintenance budget of £10,000. Further discussions to be held with Chair of the Common & Cemetery Committee before the Full Council meeting on 9 Dec 19.

It was proposed that there should be no increase in the Precept/Budget for 2020/21.

Action:RFO

45/19 **Correspondence, Reports & Meetings:**

i. Internal Auditor interim report: The report was circulated prior to the meeting. No concerns were raised. The action points were noted for the RFO to action. Thanks was given to the RFO for a good audit result.

Action:RFO

ii. External Audit report AGAR 2018-19: The audited AGAR was received on the 23rd July 2019. There were no matters arising. The AGAR and Notice of Conclusion have been displayed on the noticeboards and on the website in line with regulations.

With no further business to be transacted, the meeting closed at 21:08 hrs

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46/19 **Shedfield Recreation Ground Charity:**

i. To confirm current bank balance: The bank balance was noted at £3,231.96.

ii. Approval lists: It was noted that an initial was missing from txn 478. The expenditure as per the circulated approval lists were noted as:

July 19 - £1,548.50

Aug 19 - £816.08

Sep 19 - £616.15

Oct 19 - £1,906.20

Action:RFO

iii. Review 2019/20 Q2 expenditure: The Q2 comparison was reviewed and no comments made.

With no further business to be transacted, the meeting closed at 21:12 hrs

47/19 **Shirrell Heath Recreation Ground & Allotment Charity:**

i. To confirm current bank balance: The bank balance was noted as 2,949.02.

ii. Approval lists: The expenditure as per the circulated approval lists were noted as:

July 19 - £331.40

Aug 19 - £260.62

Sep 19 - £257.01

Oct 19 - £670.22

iii. Review 2019/20 Q2 expenditure: The Q2 comparison was reviewed and no comments made.

48/19 **Items for next agenda:** Completed Actions schedule.

49/19 **Date of next meeting:** 23 March 2020.

With no further business to be transacted, the meeting closed at 21:20 hrs